

REMARKS

This Amendment is being filed in response to the Office Action mailed from the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on February 12, 2007, in which claims 1-13, 15, 78-95, 97-111, 113-134, 136-156 and 160-175 were rejected. With this Amendment, claim 112 is canceled and claims 1, 78, 113, 137, 161 and 172 are amended. Thus, Applicants respectfully request a reconsideration and allowance of pending claims 1-15, 78-95, 105-111 and 113-175.

The Office Action rejected claims 1-10, 15, 78-79, 93-95, 105-111, 113-120, 125-134, 136-144, 150-156, 160-167 and 172-173 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0018795 to Whitbourne et al. The Office Action also rejected claims 11-13, 80-92, 119, 121-124, 145-148, 168-170 and 174-175 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over the '795 publication to Whitbourne et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,160,592 to Rypacek et al.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

The Office Action stated on page 5 that dependent claim 112 contains allowable subject matter as follows:

Claims 14, 112, 135, and 157-159 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. (Office Action, page 5).

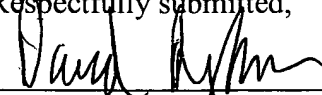
With this Amendment, Applicants have amended each independent claim number 1, 78, 113, 137, 161 and 172 to contain the limitation of dependent claim 112 which contains allowable subject matter. Thus, with this Amendment, each independent claim 1, 78, 113, 137, 161 and 172 now contains allowable subject matter. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of pending claims 1-15, 78-95, 105-111 and 113-175.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of pending claims 1-15, 78-95, 105-111 and 113-175. Applicants have made an earnest effort to respond to all issues raised in the Office Action of February 12, 2007, and to place all claims presented in condition for allowance. No amendment made was for the purpose of narrowing the scope of any claim, unless Applicants have argued herein that such amendment was made to distinguish over a particular reference or combination of references.

Applicants submit that all claims have been placed in a condition for allowance, and respectfully request an early and favorable action by the Examiner. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conversation with Applicants' attorney would expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is cordially invited to call the undersigned attorney of record.

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Respectfully submitted,



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